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PILOT CURRICULUM PROGRAM PHASE II: 2005-2006

Italian Heritage Curriculum: "The Universality of Italian Heritage"

Unit Four: Kindergarten & First Grades

"The Cunning Shoemaker: An Italian Fairy Tale"

Grades K-1

Language Arts/Character Education/World Languages

Purpose:

Students will be able to:

1. Compare the fairy tale to modern characters, such as Bugs Bunny.
2. Identify the genre of the story as a Fairy Tale.
3. Demonstrate their comprehension of the Fairy Tale.
4. Determine the character of the people in the tale.

Key Terms:

Shilling A coin used in the United Kingdom, worth one twentieth of a pound. A shilling is worth around 8 US cents (\$0.08)

Crown piece A silver coin worth 5 shillings. A crown pence is worth around 40 US cents (US\$0.40).

Florin A small gold coin first issued at Florence, Italy, in 1252. This coin was worth two shillings, or 16 US cents (\$0.16).

Pence Plural of penny; pennies.

Theme:

Most world cultures have the tradition of the fairy tale, which originated from oral folk tales that told of legendary characters, wonderful adventures and contained hopeful visions or moral lessons. In Europe, the fairy tale genre began developing with the advent of print media, when authors from Italy, England and France began writing down folk tales from the oral tradition. Many children are familiar with fairy tales compiled by the Brothers Grimm during the 19th century or tales from French folklore, like "Little Red Riding Hood." Italian literature boasts a vast and rich collection of fairy tales, among the first compilations of which were published by the Italian author Giambattista Basile in his *Pentameron* in 1634. The modern Italian author Italo Calvino also published a collection of Italian Fairy Tales in the 20th century.

Since the scientific and psychological recognition of the developmental needs of children did not prominently emerge until the 18th century, many of the so-called fairy tales for children can be quite frightening or problematic for the modern child. This is especially true with the Brothers Grimm tales, which are often told in a diluted fashion, eliminating the bawdier, violent or troubling elements of the story.

In introducing children to original fairy tales, which in this lesson is represented by an Italian fairy tale of Sicilian origin, teachers will sometimes use television cartoons as the means of comparison. Since most students are familiar with the Bugs Bunny cartoons, the character, plot structure and moral elements of fairy tales can be bridged to Bugs Bunny. For example, no matter who tries to mess with Bugs Bunny, Bugs Bunny always manages to outwit his adversary. The cunning rabbit often uses his opponents' weaknesses and vices against him. Elmer Fudd, Yosemite Sam, the Martian, the Monster, among others, are often left a babbling mess each time they try to confront the "Wiley Wabbit."

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Many Italian fairy tales offer similar plots. The hero is usually an underdog who has to face a superior adversary. The hero uses his quick wit against his opponents' by appealing to their greed or desires. In this story, called "The Cunning Shoemaker" an astute cobbler befuddles a group of dangerous robbers by appealing to their avarice and exploiting their obvious lack of intelligence.

Activities:

- I. Ask students if they have ever watched Bugs Bunny on TV.
 - a. Remind them how Bugs always outsmarts his adversaries, such as Elmer Fudd, Yosemite Sam, the Martian, or the Monster.
 - i. He uses his wit to stop his adversaries, right in their tracks.
- II. Tell students that you are going to read an Italian Fairy tale, called "The Cunning Shoemaker."
 - a. As you read the story, you will stop and ask the students some questions to check for understanding.
 - i. You can also use this opportunity to discuss some character issues.
- III. Download the Fairy Tale from website. Read appropriate segments from web pages provided in lesson plan Engage in group discussion as prompted by questions and suggested procedures:
 - a. .
 - i. **What does the shoemaker traveling to Mascalucia tell you about his character?**
 - ii. **Why would the shoemaker buy a donkey?**
 - iii. **When the shoemaker saw robbers in the distance, what did he do with the donkey?**
 - iv. **What did the shoemaker use to defend himself from the robbers?**
 - v. **How did he know that the robbers would fall for the trick?**
 1. .
 - vi. **After buying himself a good dinner, what did the shoemaker buy?**
 - a. **What does the shoemakers' purchase of a vineyard, tell**
 - vii. **After the captain of the robbers realized that they had been tricked, why didn't he tell his men and instead, allow them to find out for themselves?**
 - viii. **What does that tell you about the captain's character?**
 - b.
 - i. **When the shoemaker saw robbers in the distance, what did tell his wife to do?**
 - ii. **Why did the shoemaker employ such an outrageous plan?**
 - iii. **What did the shoemaker use to defend himself from the robbers?**
 - iv. **How did he know that the robbers would fall for the trick?**
 - v. **After the captain of the robbers realized that he had killed his wife, why didn't he tell his men and instead, allowed them to kill their wives and find out for themselves?**
 - vi. **What does that tell you about the captain's character?**
 - c. :
 - i. **When the shoemaker saw robbers in the distance, what did he do with the donkey?**
 - ii. **What did the shoemaker use to defend himself from the robbers?**
 - iii. **How did he know that the robbers would fall for the trick?**
 - iv. **After the captain of the robbers realized he had been tricked a third time, why didn't he tell his men and instead allow them to find out for themselves?**
 1. .
 - v. **What does that tell you about the captain's character?**
 - vi. **What did the robbers do, once they figured out they had the shoemakers had conned them for a third time?**
 - vii. **What did the shoemaker do when the robbers went into a church to cool off?**

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- viii. **How did the shoemaker know the swine herder would switch with him?**
- ix. **What happened to the swine herder?**
- x. **What did the shoemaker use to defend himself from the robbers?**
- xi. **How did he know that the robbers would fall for the trick?**